

# WRIGHTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## ANNUAL PARISH REPORT 2018

### 1. PARISH COUNCIL Chairman and Vice-Chairman

At the Meeting of the Council held on 15 May 2017 Councillor Mrs J Burton was elected as Chairman of the Parish Council for the year 2017/2018, and Councillor Mr F Hodgkinson was elected Vice-Chairman.

### 2. PARISH COUNCILLORS

At May 2017 Wrightington Parish Councillors were:-

#### APPLEY BRIDGE

Mr J Clinch	16 Clifton Crescent, Wigan.
Mr C House	77 Runshaw Avenue, Appley Bridge, Wigan

#### MOSSY LEA

Mrs Judith Burton	2 Courage Low Lane, Wrightington.
Mr Frank Hodgkinson	Acrefield House, 17A Broadhurst Lane, Wrightington.
Mr F Johnson	351 Mossy Lea Road, Wrightington.
Mr P Gartside	2 Chisnall Avenue, Wrightington.

The Parish Council began the year with 6 members. Councillor Gartside has now been living with his son for some months due to deterioration in his health. Councillors have accepted this reason for his absence from Meetings and will shortly be discussing the best course of action in this regard. During the course of the year the Council received an application from a resident of Mossy Lea, however, after attending 3 Parish Council Meetings she reported a change in her personal circumstances which prevented her from committing to the role of a Parish Councillor. The Parish Council remains at 6 Parish Councillors and 2 vacancies. The Clerk has attended Liaison Meetings with West Lancashire Borough Council Officers and other Clerk's to assist with various issues arising during the course of the year. Councillors have attended briefing sessions, Councillors Code of Conduct Training, open days, public consultations and site meetings to address issues which arise in the Parish as required. The Chairman was once again nominated to attend the Buckingham Palace Garden Party. Councillor Clinch, the Parish Council representative on the Peter Lathom Charity, reported that the money allocated for Wrightington this year would again be divided equally between Appley Bridge and Mossy Lea Pensioners Groups. The Parish Council and Councillors continued to work throughout the year with Borough Councillor Mrs Baybutt, Borough Councillor Mrs Evans and County Councillor Fillis.

### 3. FINANCE & PROCEDURE

All advisory, informative and procedural documentation used by the Parish Council was reviewed, amended and approved as required during the course of the year and formally adopted at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council. Following a detailed Budget Meeting, it was determined that the Parish Requirement for 2017/18 would be £16,000.00 – top up grant of £700.00. The Parish Council precepted upon West Lancs. BC for the sum of £15,300 for the 2017/18 financial year. Concurrent Contributions were also received. Changes in the way the Parish Council Finances are handled, implemented in 2003, continue to ensure that financial matters function efficiently and effectively. It was necessary to appoint a new internal auditor towards the end of the financial year due to illness. The Parish Council appointed Mrs Margaret Stewart as the new Internal Auditor for this and ensuing years. The Parish Council accounts for the year ending 31 March 2017 were audited by BDO, with the only matter arising being the input of an incorrect digit in the Parish Precept. Once explained to the Auditors the input error was accepted and no additional costs were incurred or action required. The Council has taken all the action necessary throughout the course of the year to satisfy audit requirements prior to the submission of the end of year financial report to the external auditors and, following notification of changes, accepted that new Audit Arrangements

will be in place from 2018. The Councils Financial Statement for the year ending 31 March 2018 will be approved at the May Parish Council Meeting.

#### **4. PLANNING**

The Parish Council is notified of all planning applications within the Parish and is able to submit comments, observations and objections when necessary. The Parish Council however, has no power of direction or decision making in these matters.

43 Planning Applications have been dealt with by the Parish Council during the year in comparison to 47 applications last year.

There were no controversial planning applications in the Parish during this year however, the Parish Council did express their concern at the numerous planning applications and the continued alteration and extension to the BP Garage, Crow Orchard Road. The Parish Council are concerned that the poor drainage system/holding tank at the site is insufficient to cope with the additional number of visitors using the site almost like a small scale motorway service area. Parking provision is also considered inadequate for the increase in vehicle movements at the site. Following complaints from the Parish Council the excessive amount of advertising signs associated with the Costa Coffee outlet at the site was dramatically reduced as they were considered a distraction for motorists.

The Borough Council do not have to notify neighbours when a planning application is submitted to them, therefore in cases where adjoining occupiers, or others affected by applications, become aware of proposed developments it is always advisable to submit observations and objections directly. Parish Councillors and members of the public can access all planning applications by logging onto the West Lancashire Borough Council website. By inputting the planning application number, address of the property or type of planning application and approximate location or date, the application details, maps, plans and associated documents can be viewed and comments, objections and observations submitted online.

#### **5. PARISH COUNCIL ACTIVITY**

The Parish Council is the first tier in the democratic structure of Local Government. The Council can also act as a pressure group putting forward the views of residents on topics affecting the area. The following are some of the areas in which Wrightington Parish Council have been involved during the past year:

The Parish Council once again produced their Annual Newsletter distribution being undertaken by Councillors, the Clerk, Borough Councillors and other volunteers in the Parish. The Council would like to thank all those who volunteered for their assistance with delivery and hope that they can rely on their support again this year.

The Parish Council has made Donations during the course of the year including £100 to Appley Bridge Pensioners Social Club, £100 to Wrightington Pensioners' Welfare Association and £100 to North West Air Ambulance.

The Parish Council arranged 2 public meeting with representatives of Ironman attending to discuss how to reduce the disruption caused by this event in the Parish. Following successful negotiation and liaison between residents of Church lane, Ironman representatives and the Parish Council, the event went much better than in previous years. The Parish Council recently received notification that the route will be amended this year to remove Church Lane from the event and re-route the race using Tunley Lane.

#### **POLICING**

PCSO Andy Holderness remains responsible for Policing Wrightington, Parbold, Hilledale, Bispham, Dalton, Newburgh, and sometimes beyond when the need requires.

PCSO Holderness attends Parish Council Meetings when possible following up Police matters as required. PACT issues can still be raised at the Coffee Mornings held at Mossy Lea Village Hall which PCSO Holderness also sometimes attends to meet residents, pass on information and advice, and to collect details of PACT issues requiring attention.

A road closure was obtained and Policing put in place to enable Remembrance Day plans to proceed as in previous years.

## **VILLAGE HALLS**

Fire detection and security at the village halls is monitored and checked annually and all electrical equipment has been PAT tested. Christmas Trees were again erected at both Village Halls and both Village Halls were again used in May for the Local Council elections.

## **APPLEY BRIDGE**

Following a successful Capital Bid to West Lancs. BC, painting of the whole of the interior of the village hall has recently been completed. The fluorescent lights in the main hall were changed for health and safety reasons during the course of the year for LED lights as the Breakfast/After School Club smashed the fluorescent tubes on a number of occasions playing ball games, which are now prohibited in the hall. Parked cars remain a problem on the village hall car park. With the assistance of the PCSO some vehicles were successfully removed. Notices are placed on the windcreens of vehicles seen parking regularly on the car park however, these seem to have little effect. A Capital Bid has recently been submitted to West Lancs. BC for the installation of a barrier at the entrance to the car park to ensure that parking remains only for use by village hall users. Reflectors have been attached to the entrance/exit posts of the car park and solar lights have been added to the front of the village hall to assist when using the village hall on dark nights. Part of the boundary wall to the left side of the hall suffered damage from tree roots which, during the passage of time, caused a section of the wall to fall over on to the walking footpath adjacent. The Parish Council arranged for the path to be cleared and the stone is now on the grass whilst the Parish Council negotiates with West Lancs. BC to determine responsibility and liability for the cost of rebuilding the wall. A number of constructive Village Hall Committee Meetings have taken place during the course of the year and issues arising have been dealt with in due course. The Village Hall continues to be used on a regular basis for various meetings and classes including jujitsu, the Women's Institute, yoga classes, exercise classes, Moo Music, Slimming World, the Pensioners Association and Old Hall Brass Band. The hall is also used for polling purposes as required.

## **MOSSY LEA**

Coffee Mornings held regularly at the village hall and supported by the Parish Council, are still well attended and continue to raise funds for Cancer Research UK. The Parish Council continue to fully support this village amenity by allowing the use of the village hall free of charge. A Christmas Fair was held in late November, which was well attended and an enjoyable afternoon. Hot-pot Supper and Sing-a-longs are also held. The Parish Council are currently monitoring water use at the village hall following receipt of some large water bills. It appears that the excessive usage is related to the urinals in the gents' toilets. The flushing mechanism has recently been adjusted again to try to reduce the volume of water being used. The hall continues to be used for children's parties, Yoga classes, Craft classes, Reiki Meetings, Moo Music, by the COPD & Sleep Apnoea group, for Embroidery Classes, for polling purposes, by the Church of God and, for Meetings and Training Events by outside bodies. Following receipt of further CIL of £2,234.31 the Clerk reported that, following enquiries, it had been confirmed that this money could be set aside and accrued for a short period of time, towards the possible extension of the village hall, however, more recently the Parish Council has decided to use this money to purchase and install picnic tables on the play area adjacent to Mossy Lea Village Hall and on the play area at Appley Lane South.

Damage to paintwork at both village halls, caused by chair backs being placed against the wall, has now been addressed by adding a white composite material to the wall at the correct height to prevent further damage. The Parish Council has recently negotiated a new contract with Fir Tree Fisheries, Appley Bridge, to plant, water and maintain the planters outside each village hall for the

forthcoming season. The Parish Council plans to plant in red, white and blue flowers this year to commemorate the RAF Centenary. Furthermore, 2 Silent Soldiers have also been purchased one to be located in each ward of the Parish to acknowledge that it is 100 years since the end of World War I. The Parish Council again supported the West Lancs. BC initiative by purchasing and flying Armed Forces flags at both village halls.

Work to increase the income potential of both Village Halls remains on-going. The Parish Council would like to express its appreciation to the Voluntary Management Committees and the caretaker for all the work they do in maintaining the Village Halls.

### **HIGHWAYS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

A number of litter picks have been requested throughout the year at various locations including Mossy Lea Road, Moss Lane, Hall Lane, Crow Orchard Lane, Courage Low Lane, Toogood Lane and Broadhurst Lane.

Parking problems in Appley Bridge, on Appley Lane North, remain an issue, being commuters using the railway station. LCC installed intermittent yellow lines on Appley Lane North to provide passing places for vehicles affected by commuter parking along this route.

In October 2017 the Parish Council received notice of the making of the Order for upgrading Wrightington Footpath 21 (Moss Lane to Mossy Lea Road) to a bridleway. The Parish Council await confirmation of the order in due course.

The Parish Council continue to object to the obstruction of the lay-by on Hall Lane by the owners of 1 Coalgate Cottages. The Parish Council understand that this matter is with LCC and that the boulders are there to protect the head wall which requires remedial work. The Parish Council continue to insist that the boulders are an obstruction of the highway and request their removal.

Foul water seeping from the holding tank at the rear of the BP Crow Orchard Garage continues to be a problem. The water seeps from the holding tank, under the wall and onto the old road at the rear of the garage. The smell associated with the seepage is also offensive. The Parish Council has been informed that the holding tank will now be emptied every 2 weeks.

Drainage problems continue in several locations in the Parish e.g.: outside 15 Mossy Lea Road, near Rigbye's Bridge on Mossy Lea Road, in front of Mossy Lea Village Hall, at the bottom of Raby Fold Farm driveway and on Appley Lane North, particularly at the junction with Skull House Lane. It is understood that the money to repair the drains in the field opposite 15 Mossy Lea Road has been allocated for this purpose twice; however, the work has still not been undertaken.

Pot-holes in the parish are the subject of continual discussion at Parish Council Meetings whilst footway sweeping and gully emptying remain a major concern in the Parish. More attention is required as there is no continuity in either the road sweeping or gully emptying schedules.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Council has dealt with a considerable volume and variety of business during the past year including complaints from members of the public about various matters.

Any resident who requires help or advice on any problem affecting the area is welcome to bring it to the attention of the Parish Council either through a Parish Councillor, the Clerk to the Council or at Open Forum which is held at the beginning of each Parish Council Meeting.

Report from Mrs C A Cross  
The Clerk to the Council  
21 May 2018